7. Revegetation/Stabilization

Skid trail stabilized with logging slash.

As already pointed out in previous sections, some temporary haul roads, skid trails, log landings, firebreaks and other forestry related soil disturbing activities require the establishment of a vegetative cover to stabilize mineral soil surfaces so as to reduce erosion and runoff of sediment into state waters. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service can provide a detailed plan for establishing vegetation on these disturbed sites.

Site preparation, such as smoothing or reshaping rutted roads and landings, may be required before conventional equipment can be used for seedbed preparation, seeding, mulching and drainage improvement. Heavily compacted areas may require ripping and/or disking to allow water infiltration and provide a suitable seedbed for root growth.

Agricultural limestone and fertilizer may be needed to ensure success in establishing a vegetative cover. Soil tests are recommended. Incorporate lime and fertilizer into the top 2-4" of soil on slopes less than 6%; into the top 2"of soil on slopes of 6-10%; and onto the surface only on slopes greater than 10%.

Plant species recommendations can be obtained from the local county office of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service or Cooperative Extension Service. Areas treated by temporary seeding or mulch should be reseeded with permanent vegetative species as soon as possible during the correct growing season to ensure stabilization of disturbed areas. Disking or mowing of temporary cover is recommended before application of permanent seed and fertilizer.

Mulch is recommended for critical situations to hold seed, lime and fertilizer in place, maintain moisture and prevent extreme temperatures on the soil surface. Mulch needs to be applied immediately after seeding to provide best benefits.

Vegetative establishment for control of erosion and sedimentation can be considered successful once a 75% cover has been obtained. Within one

Vegetated forest road.

year of establishment, a second broadcast application of fertilizer at half the original rate is recommended to ensure plant survival and growth.

Silt screen and hay bales can be used to filter runoff water from closed roads and skid trails to prevent or stop sediment from flowing downslope into waters of the state. When using silt screen, 5-6 foot-long posts should be staked 5-10 feet apart across the problem area. The porous material is stapled 3 feet high on the post and excess material at the bottom of the screen is folded uphill and anchored down with rocks or fill material. Hog wire can be stapled to the stakes before the material is attached to give strength to the silt screen as intercepted sediment builds up.

Square hay bales can be used for the same purpose by lining them up across the road, end to end and one to two bales high. Stake the bales in place on their sides with the strings off the ground to prevent rotting.

Gully stabilization should receive high priority during all land management activities. The most effective way to reduce sediment production and/or reduce the change of reactivating the erosion process in healed gully systems is to avoid operating in them and maintain all existing vegetation. Site preparation, including herbicide and burning, should be excluded.

Actively eroding gully systems need to be stabilized. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service can provide technical assistance in planning and installing gully stabilization measures.